

# GREENE NAFTALI

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monika Baer

*on hold*

November 20, 2015 – January 16, 2016

Greene Naftali is pleased to announce Monika Baer's first solo exhibition in New York.

Since the late 1980s as a student at Düsseldorf Art Academy, Baer has maintained a singular practice in dialogue with the history of painting, orchestrating confrontations between disparate visual traditions on her canvases. Trompe-l'oeil renderings, appendages and incisions to the literal surface of the canvas, and atmospheric fields of paint constitute the complex spatial logic of Baer's compositions. Baer's studiously painted motifs—deli meats, currency, and brick walls are among the representations that have recurred in her body of work—follow the modernist fixation with the quotidian, but also tether the works to traditional representation. In the works on view, liquor bottles act as a mimetic anchor, receding and advancing, dissolving and materializing again—flirting with the notion of a stable pictorial system.

Inserted alternately into fields of dense black and translucent pastels, Baer's liquor bottles mingle among abbreviated figural sketches, sweeping gestures, and dense impasto. *In Pieces* (2013–2014) comprises trompe-l'oeil corks inscribing dimensionality into the picture plane, their attendant bottles scraped to faint indications, while a seam in the canvas calls attention to the literal surface of the painting. A stylized sketch of a human face further complicates the scene, its eyes directed at the periphery of the canvas rather than at the tableau within. In Baer's dark canvases, such as *on hold (pink pitú)* (2015), bottles are pared to their labels, still graded as though wrapped around glass, and receding into a tumultuous ink-black ground. Graphically reductive yet still rendered with attention to spatial systems, Baer's bottles appear to be engulfed as the series progresses. With *on hold* (2015), her representational images are entirely eclipsed, and a small mirror is attached at the painting's bottom edge—introducing another vehicle of mimesis into the ever-shifting architecture of her paintings.

This exhibition will be accompanied by the release of Baer's most recent catalogue, published in conjunction with her first solo museum exhibition at The Art Institute of Chicago in 2013, which traveled to Williams College in 2014. Monika Baer lives and works in Berlin. Recent solo presentations include Williams College of Art, Williamstown, MA; Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin; and Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles. Recent group exhibitions include *Painting 2.0*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne. Her work is included in the public collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; SAMMLUNG VERBUND, Vienna; the Collection of The University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Chicago; and Museum Ludwig, Cologne.

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